

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC, SCUL, UR, US

SUBJECT- CANCELLATION OF DON COSSACK PERFORMANCES IN NEW
YORK CITY

REF: STATE 085459

1. FYI. FOLLOWING IS CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE TO BE
USED BY DEPARTMENT SPOKESMEN IF WE ARE ASKED QUESTIONS ON
THE SUBJECT OF THE CANCELLATION:

2. Q: WAS CAMI IN TOUCH WITH THE DEPARTMENT BEFORE IT MADE
ITS DECISION?

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A: YES, CAMI OFFICIALS DISCUSSED THE MATTER WITH DEPARTMENT OFFICERS, WHO EXPRESSED THE DEPARTMENT'S INTEREST IN WORKING WITH CAMI TO ENSURE A SUCCESSFUL TOUR OF THE COMPANY. THE DECISION TO CANCEL, HOWEVER, WAS MADE BY CAMI ALONE.

3. Q: WHAT TECHNICAL REASONS COULD CAUSE THE CANCELLATION, OR WERE THERE IN FACT OTHER CONSIDERATIONS?

A: SINCE IT WAS THE DECISION OF CAMI OFFICIALS, I THINK YOU SHOULD ASK THEM WHAT THEY MEAN BY TECHNICAL REASONS. FOR OUR PART, WE WERE PREPARED TO ASSIST IN WHATEVER WAY WE COULD TO FACILITATE THE TOUR.

4. Q: DID THE RECENT SHOOTINGS IN NEW YORK CITY AT SMUN HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE DECISION?

A: AS YOU KNOW, WE DEPLORE SUCH ACTS OF VIOLENCE AND ARE DOING WHAT WE CAN TO PREVENT THEM AND TO APPREHEND THE PERPETRATORS. WE SEEK TO TAKE APPROPRIATE STEPS IN CONSULTATION WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES FOR SOVIET PERFORMING ARTS GROUPS AND WERE PREPARED TO DO SO THIS TIME. HOWEVER, AS I SAID BEFORE, THE DECISION TO CANCEL WAS TAKEN BY CAMI FOR ITS OWN REASONS. THEREFORE, NO POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE SHOULD BE READ INTO THE CANCELLATION.

5. Q: IS THIS CANCELLATION LIKELY TO HAVE ANY EFFECT ON OUR CULTURAL RELATIONS WITH THE USSR?

A: WE SEE NO REASON WHY IT SHOULD. THE GROUP HAD ALREADY COMPLETED A TWO-MONTH TOUR OF THE US; ONLY THE LAST FOUR PERFORMANCES WERE CANCELLED. TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, AMERICAN IMPRESARIOS ARE CONTINUING TO NEGOTIATE CONTRACTS WITH APPROPRIATE SOVIET ORGANIZATIONS FOR TOURS BY SOVIET PERFORMING ARTS GROUPS.

6. Q: WHAT OTHER SOVIET GROUPS HAVE TOURED THE US THIS YEAR? HAVE ANY OF THEIR PERFORMANCES BEEN CANCELLED?

A: IN TERMS OF PERFORMING ARTS GROUPS, SO FAR IN 1976 THERE HAS ONLY BEEN THE TOUR OF THE MOSCOW STATE CIRCUS, WHICH ACTUALLY BEGAN ITS US TOUR IN DECEMBER 1975 AND CON-

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TINUED THROUGH A SERIES OF SCHEDULED PERFORMANCES UP INTO FEBRUARY 1976. IN TERMS OF INDIVIDUAL PERFORMING ARTISTS, THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER WHO HAVE TOURED THE US THUS FAR IN 1976; WE CAN CITE SOME EXAMPLES: PIANIST ALEKSEYEV; PIANIST BERMAN; THE HUSBAND-AND-WIFE TEAM OF ROZHDESTVENSKIY AND POSTNIKOVA; THE GLINKA HARP QUARTET; CONDUCTOR KONDRASHIN; PIANIST SLOBODYANIK; PIANIST SEVIDOV; CONDUCTOR TEMIRKANOV; VIOLINIST TRETYAKOV. TO THE BEST OF

OUR KNOWLEDGE, NONE OF THEIR PERFORMANCES WERE CANCELLED.
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